Armor, Cavalry, and Transformation: "New" Cavalry for the Interim Force

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If you don't understand transformation, now's a good time and place to get on board.[1]

On 15 September 2000 at Fort Lewis, Washington, our Army cased the colors of a proud outfit, 1st Battalion, 32d Armor, and reactivated the 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry. The 14th Cavalry Regiment, born in 1901, first saw action in the Philippines where it conducted limited combat operations and security missions throughout the archipelago, what we would call today Small Scale Contingency (SSC) operations. 1-14 Cavalry is the first in a series of "new" cavalry organizations that will provide reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition (RSTA) for the Interim Brigade Combat Teams (IBCTs). This "transformation" of our Army will take Armor and Cavalry into the 21st century, with these new units conducting traditional cavalry operations — reconnaissance and surveillance — with an expanded focus. The purpose of this essay is to describe the changing operational environment and the organization of the squadron.[2]

Changes in the Army's Operational Environment

One of the increasing near-term strategic tasks facing our Army is adapting to a changing operational environment in which SSC operations and not major theaters of war (MTWs) are more likely occurrences. The operating environment for the Interim Brigade Combat Team will be considerably different from the Cold War paradigm of the past. The Industrial Age operational environment in which our Army successfully faced the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War and defeated the Iraqi Army during the Persian Gulf War has changed.

Small Scale Contingency Operations may be the rule as the operational environment moves from the Industrial Age into what has been commonly referred

Using a borrowed Canadian Army LAV, 14th Cav troopers train at Ft. Lewis.

to as the new Information Age of warfare. The U.S. Army has experienced this changing environment, most recently in operations in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

In the Information Age, the time necessary to make a decision and then to act upon that decision will be greatly condensed. Major regional crises may actually be prevented from expanding into conflicts by quickly deploying a capable American/allied force into theater. Once on the ground, that force must have the capability to conduct a full range of combat operations. Airborne units, while capable of limited light operations, will not always be the answer. An IBCT that can deploy anywhere in the world within 96 hours will be an obvious and welcome addition to the nation's capability to respond to a regional crisis or conflict. As GEN Shinseki said in a recent speech, "The Brigade Combat Teams of that Interim Force bridge the gap in our current operational shortfall between early-arriving light forces and later-arriving heavy ones. Additionally, and more importantly, it will serve as the vanguard of the Objective Force."[3]

In future conflicts, the IBCT will face a much more diverse set of enemies who will be armed with a range of conventional and unconventional capabilities. The IBCT could face opposing information technologies and advanced weapon systems available via global weapons proliferation. The definition of "enemy" solely as combatants of a nation-state's armed forces must expand to include any person, organization, agency, or situation that is, will be, or could be an obstacle to accomplishing the IBCT's mission.[4] The IBCT and the cavalry squadron are capable of operating across the spectrum of conflict. The squadron can operate "as is" in a MTW but would require augmentation if called upon to guard or cover. The squadron can operate without augmentation in SSC operations.[5]

Given the near-term strategic CINC requirements, the IBCT will undoubtedly face a wide range of non-traditional enemies. These potential enemies will employ asymmetric capabilities and tactics intended to neutralize U.S. strengths and exploit vulnerabilities where possible. Our enemies will at-

tempt to operate in unpredictable ways and avoid patterns. The enemy will combine military operations with activities from an assortment of partners from paramilitary units and police forces, to irregular forces and terrorists. Political factions, within or out of government, non-government agencies, transnational organizations, criminal gangs, and even refugee populations may also be factors in these types of operations. It is equally likely that, in some operational areas, military capabilities may not be the enemy's critical capabilities.

Further complicating the range of missions for the IBCTs and the cavalry will be the possible geographical areas in which these potential enemies will operate. Future operations will be conducted in areas ranging from complex urban sprawl to outlying areas of weak infrastructure dominated by inferior roads and bridges. The potential operating areas may not have multiple major air and seaports capable of handling large sealift ships and large aircraft. The need for reconnaissance to gather information and intelligence about the enemy in this environment cannot be overstated.

Squadron Organization

The 1-14 Cavalry, as the first of the "new" cavalry squadrons of the interim force, is organized and equipped to conduct reconnaissance, surveillance, and target acquisition tasks for the IBCT. It is a tough, robust cavalry organization (see figure at right). The Headquarters and Headquarters Troop (HHT) provides the squadron's command and control capability. The vehicles of the HHT form the squadron tactical operations center, a forward command post (TAC), a reduced combat trains command post, and a reduced field trains command post that will integrate with the IBCT Brigade Support Battalion. All vehicles in the squadron will be equipped with FBCB2 (Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below). FBCB2 will increase friendly situational awareness throughout the squadron and brigade. The squadron will have the benefit of a Trojan Spirit-Lite, which gives the squadron informational "reach" capability. The squadron also has three retrans teams that, along with other retrans teams throughout the brigade, will help maintain the IBCT communications and digital network.
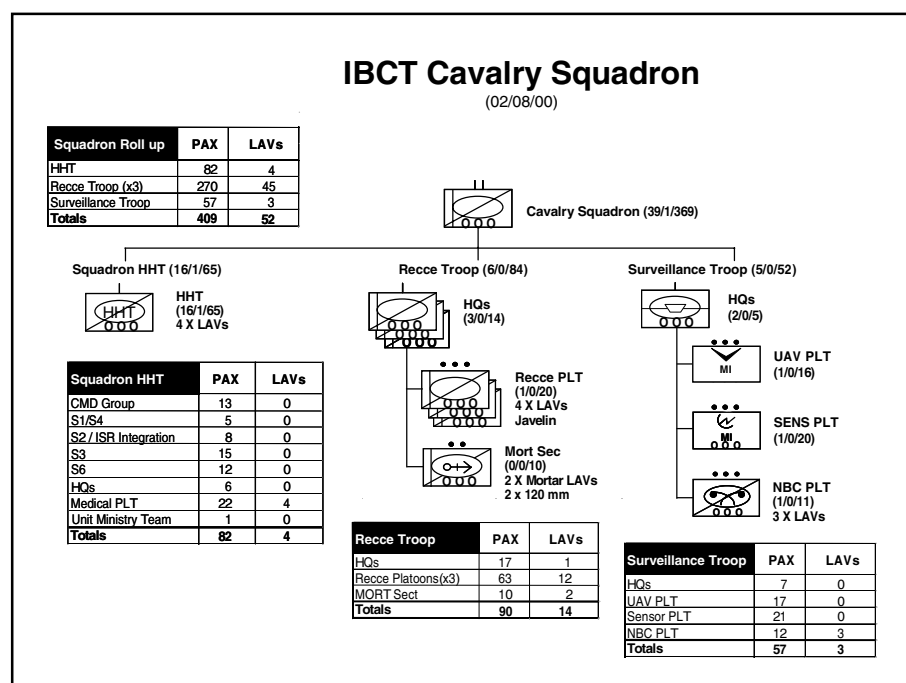
The reconnaissance (recce) troops are organized for extended operations in a large area of operation. The troops have a small headquarters section, which gives the troop commander the ability to monitor the situation in his area of responsibility, coordinate lethal and non-lethal effects, and conduct limited supply operations. Each recce troop has a three-man FIST team assigned. The troop mortar section has two 120mm mortar carriers and a fire direction center IAV. The troop mortars can mark targets for air-delivered fires, provide immediate suppression and smoke, and illumination for night operations. The recce troop command post also has an operations sergeant (19D30), a senior counter-intelligence NCO (97B30), and an NBC NCO (54B20) assigned. An Air Force TACP team will be attached to each recce troop during operations.

The recce platoons are equipped with four Interim Armored vehicles (IAVs).[6] The platoon has one counter-intelligence trained soldier (97B MOS) assigned to each scout squad. These Human Intelligence (HUMINT) specialists give the platoon additional capability to gather a broad range of information and intelligence. The platoon has four Javelin anti-tank weapons for encounters with enemy light armor. The platoon is capable of multi-dimensional coverage of named areas of interest (NAIs) and can conduct reconnaissance using mounted and dismounted patrols.

The Surveillance Troop gives the squadron commander and IBCT commander an expanded surveillance and target acquisition capability. The troop consists of the troop headquarters, an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) platoon, a multi-sensor platoon, and an NBC reconnaissance platoon. The UAV platoon is the "air" complement of the squadron and extends the range of the squadron commander's "eyes" in covering critical NAIs. The multi-sensor platoon has two sections: REMBASS/ GSR and PROPHET. The REMBASS/ GSR section provides distant and remote capabilities to cover NAIs in all types of weather, day and night. PROPHET gives the squadron an expanded SIGINT capability to intercept and DF enemy communications and provides a platform for future electronic warfare capabilities. The NBC recon platoon provides the squadron the capability to survey industrial sites that could be used to manufacture chemical or biological agents, conducts NBC detection surveys, and provides force protection

IBCT Cavalry Squadron
(02/08/00)

Squadron Roll up	PAX	LAVs
HHT	82	4
Recce Troop (x3)	270	45
Surveillance Troop	57	3
Totals	409	52

Cavalry Squadron (39/1/369)

Squadron HHT (16/1/65) — HHT (16/1/65) 4 X LAVs

Squadron HHT	PAX	LAVs
CMD Group	13	0
S1/S4	5	0
S2 / ISR Integration	8	0
S3	15	0
S6	12	0
HQs	6	0
Medical PLT	22	4
Unit Ministry Team	1	0
Totals	82	4

Recce Troop (6/0/84) — HQs (3/0/14)
Recce PLT (1/0/20) 4 X LAVs Javelin
Mort Sec (0/0/10) 2 X Mortar LAVs 2 x 120 mm

Recce Troop	PAX	LAVs
HQs	17	1
Recce Platoons(x3)	63	12
MORT Sect	10	2
Totals	90	14

Surveillance Troop (5/0/52) — HQs (2/0/5)
UAV PLT (1/0/16)
SENS PLT (1/0/20)
NBC PLT (1/0/11) 3 X LAVs

Surveillance Troop	PAX	LAVs
HQs	7	0
UAV PLT	17	0
Sensor PLT	21	0
NBC PLT	12	3
Totals	57	3

through early warning of enemy NBC use.

The interim force cavalry conducts traditional reconnaissance, surveillance, and screening operations within capability. The central task of the 1-14 Cavalry is to provide the capability that permits the IBCT commander and his subordinate units to see and understand the entirety of a multi-dimensional enemy and develop and sustain a thorough understanding of the situation. This capability enables the IBCT commander to dominate his battle space. In fact, the operational success of the brigade depends on this reconnaissance and surveillance effort.

Reconnaissance Operations

Developing an understanding of the situation will require a multi-dimensional approach to reconnaissance that goes beyond the Cold War singular intelligence focus on military forces. A multi-dimensional approach encompasses demographic, social, cultural, political, and economic factors as well as military forces. This signals a return to the traditional focus of U.S. cavalry required in operations against the Indians on the western frontier in the late nineteenth century, to the Moros and Huks of the Philippines in the early twentieth century. The IBCT must have the means to reduce unpredictability, identify critical enemy capabilities and vulnerabilities, and apply its combat power in the most effective manner to achieve operational success. Understanding that the situation begins with developing a broader, deeper understanding of the totality of the operational environment is absolutely essential to the brigade's success.

A multi-dimensional approach to reconnaissance expands on the traditional forms of reconnaissance. Troopers must interact with the local populace throughout the area of operations. Understanding human dimensions of the environment (political, religious, ethnic, criminal) are essential for effective decisive action along the spectrum of conflict. Counterintelligence troopers and scouts within the squadron collect and analyze information through contact with community leaders and the local populace. The ability to gain multi-dimensional information and intelligence while conducting traditional

zone, area, and route reconnaissance missions will assist in countering or defeating asymmetrical threats.

The squadron must also routinely perform RSTA tasks in urban and other complex terrain situations. Coordinating the air/ground collectors of the surveillance troop with ground recce troops enables the squadron commander to accomplish his primary mission of providing continuous, accurate, and timely information in complex environments. UAVs somewhat mitigate the lack of manned air recce and provide the squadron with valuable air/ground reconnaissance capabilities.

The development of HUMINT assets is particularly important in SSCs. HUMINT assets generate local information, a "street-sense" for the area of operation. Troopers of the squadron must develop the savvy of a "beat cop" or detective, especially in SSCs. The leaders throughout the squadron will learn both the formal and the informal political power structure of the region. They will use HUMINT to develop an understanding of police/secret police/ intelligence agencies, any criminal enterprises, the military and paramilitary structures, the terrain, and the sensitivities of the populace. They must be adept in information collection methods. Like cavalry operations during the UN mission in Haiti, troopers may conduct police-like activities, such as

stakeouts. Trooper-based, human-intensive intelligence will balance the limitations of equipment-based sensors.

One of six battalions within the brigade (see figure below), the 1-14 Cavalry has a unique relationship to the other maneuver units. The infantry units are assigned areas, zones or sectors of operation. The 1-14 Cavalry will operate throughout the entire brigade area of responsibility, including those assigned to infantry battalions and other brigade units. The area of operations could range from 50 x 50 kilometers to as large as 100 x 100 kilometers. Actual employment of 1-14 Cavalry will be based on mission analysis. The brigade commander's requirement to see and understand the various aspects of the environment will drive the placement of the 1-14 Cavalry, either into large areas or concentrated in smaller cities. Understanding the situation will enable the squadron commander to focus on the primary mission of information gathering. Accomplishing this task provides other combat and combat support units a common picture of the area of responsibility.

Obtaining valid battle damage assessment (BDA) is an equally vital but difficult task for recon and surveillance units. The use of lethal and non-lethal fires in SSCs as well as MTWs must be precise. Technology coupled with human assessment (scout/counter intelli-

IBCT Organization
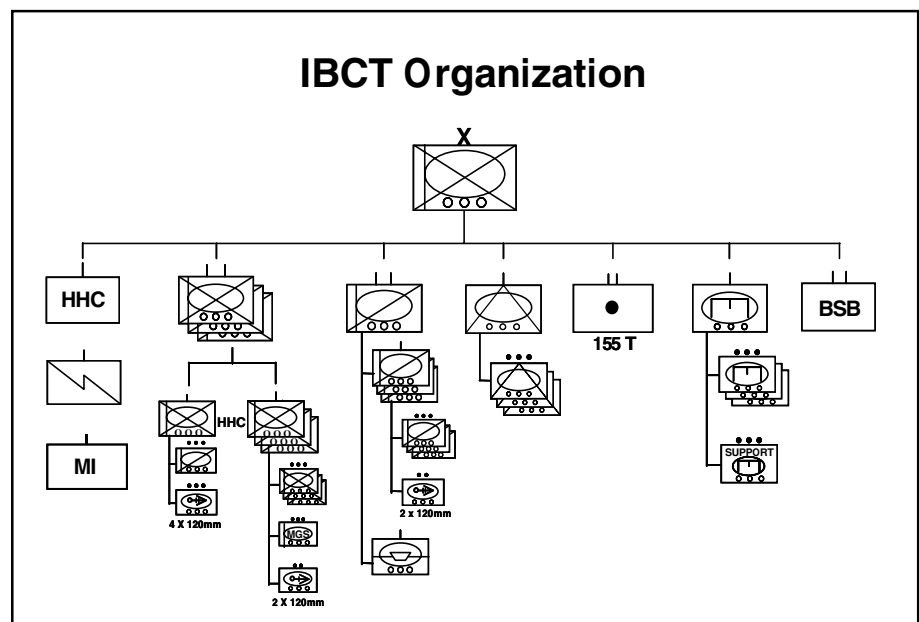
gence) capabilities provide real-time intelligence for targeting with precision munitions or focused PSYOP materials. UAVs and ground reconnaissance can then quickly determine if lethal fires were successful and the extent of any collateral damage. Ground patrols will assess the effectiveness of PSYOP/information operations. UAVs and ground sensors found in the Surveillance Troop also provide early warning that allows the brigade time to anticipate enemy actions by understanding the situation, maneuvering combat power, and making contact with fires or ground forces when and where the IBCT commander chooses. Ground reconnaissance forces and sensors working in tandem with UAVs provide unmatched situational awareness throughout a large area of operations. This situational understanding enables the brigade to anticipate, forestall, and dominate any enemy.

Conclusion

1-14 Cavalry, the first of the "new" interim force cavalry units, is uniquely organized to provide multi-dimensional informational and intelligence support for the IBCT. During the coming years, the squadron will take the first steps in developing tactics, techniques, and procedures, and refinement of the doctrine needed for the interim and objective force. As more IBCTs are organized, other squadrons of the regiment will follow. The 1-14 Cavalry is on the cutting edge of changing the way our Army will conduct warfare in the future. American cavalry has always been a reconnaissance-oriented force, and one that can fight when necessary. These new squadrons will blend technology and trooper into a force that will provide commanders with an enviable ability to "see" the battlefield, be it SSC or MTW.

The organization and intended operational use of the squadron has definite implications on how the squadron will "fight" for information. As shown in the organizational chart and in the discussion of the squadron organization, this is most definitely NOT an armored cavalry outfit. This cavalry outfit cannot stand and fight for information by trading body blows with enemy armor. The intended purpose of the squadron is to gather intelligence information and maintain contact with enemy forces across the spectrum of conflict. Maintaining contact can and must be done using the visual and electronic means available to the squadron commander. The squadron can fight as a part of bri-

gade shaping operations using the Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System (LRAS3) as a means of target designation for air- or artillery-delivered fires. In this way, the squadron helps set the conditions for the brigade's decisive operations by maintaining contact and through precise application of fire. The doctrine and tactics, techniques and procedures being written for the squadron must take this type of operation into account. The "new" cavalry of the interim force *is* a robust and tough outfit but it must be used in ways that play to its inherent strengths and not in a manner that will set it up for mission failure.

Cavalry on the American western frontier operated in uncertainty. When a cavalry patrol left its fort, troopers could face everything from natural disasters to stampedes, settler-rancher disputes, to Indian uprisings. Troopers of the western cavalry had to understand their environment, know who the reliable sheriff was, the corrupt Indian agent, the local tribal leaders, as well as the location of water holes and grazing areas. The troopers worked with Indian scouts in the west. The 14th Cavalry worked with local Filipino guides while operating in the Philippines in the early 1900s. The troopers of the "old" cavalry expanded on the traditional forms and requirements of reconnaissance.

The nature of warfare will remain a constant, as it springs from the human heart. War is the realm of danger and uncertainty. War in any form will require courage and commitment. Thus, the trooper of the squadron remains the ultimate guarantor of situational understanding; as he will do what cavalry always does, conduct mounted and dismounted patrols to protect the force. **Suivez Moi! Follow Me! The 14th Cavalry rides again!**[7]

Notes

[1]Speech by GEN Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff Army, delivered 17 Oct 2000 at the annual Association of the United States Army Convention in Washington, D.C.

[2]The 14th Cavalry Association has a fascinating website. We recommend looking it up at *www.14th-acr.org.*

[3]Shinseki AUSA speech, 17 Oct 2000. The Objective Force is the goal of Army Transformation. The vision is a more strategically mobile Army, with systems of equal or greater lethality than the legacy force, capable of fighting and winning any action along the spectrum of conflict.

[4]This definition of "enemy" is drawn from a presentation developed by the Brigade Coordination Cell (BCC) at Fort Lewis. This is a proposed definition we in the BCC found useful; the MI School has not officially approved it.

[5]We drew heavily on the Interim Brigade Combat Team Organizational & Operational Concept (O&O) final draft dated 30 June 2000. The embedded diagrams within our essay are from Chapter 7, Reconnaissance Surveillance & Target Acquisition (RSTA) Squadron, pages 2, 3, and 26.

[6]We wrote this article before the Army's formal announcement of the type of interim armored vehicle (IAV) selected for the interim force. On 16 Nov 00, the Army announced that the LAV III would be the armored vehicle of the IBCTs. The type of vehicle is not as important as the manner in which the squadron will operate.

[7]We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following officers: LTC George Juntiff, MAJ Phil Logan, MAJ Bob Finnegan, COL (Rtd) Duane Hardesty, and the writers of the RSTA chapter of the Organization and Operational Concept. These named great officers gave us their time and advice in the writing of this essay. The writers of the original chapter are unknown to us, but they contributed greatly to the Armored Force and to the Transformation of the Army. Any errors contained in the essay are ours.

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